

Happiness often refers to a mood or emotion we feel based upon the circumstances we are experiencing. God does not promise happiness in all things. We will experience pain, suffering, sadness, heartbreak, and more. Rather, God declares that we are to “rejoice always” (1 Thessalonians 5:16). The last few lessons we have observed how maintaining self-esteem, self-image, self-reliance, and life expectations in this world only rob us of our joy that can be found in God. In these final lessons we are going to study how joy is a requirement for the Christian life and how we can find that God-satisfying joy.

Shattering Your False Image

- 1 **Read 1 Corinthians 10:12.** This is a reminder of what you have learned in previous lessons.

**Therefore let anyone who thinks that he stands take heed lest he fall.
(1 Corinthians 10:12 ESV)**

What will happen if we rely on ourselves, thinking we are standing by our own power, might, and achievements? How can we avoid this outcome?

Establishing Your True Image

- 2 **Read Matthew 13:44.** Write down where joy is found. What should we be willing to do for the kingdom? How will we do it?

**The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and covered up. Then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.
(Matthew 13:44 ESV)**

- 3 **Read Romans 5:1-2.** Write down where joy is found. How to we obtain this joy?

**1 Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. 2 Through him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God.
(Romans 5:1-2 ESV)**

- 4 **Read Romans 5:3-5.** Write down where joy is found. How do we obtain joy in suffering?

3 Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, 4 and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, 5 and hope does not put us to shame....

(Romans 5:3–5 ESV)

- 5 **Read Romans 5:6-10.** Write down where joy is found. Why would this make us joyful? What are we to put our hope in? What was our identity before Christ? What is our identity after Christ?

6 For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. 7 For one will scarcely die for a righteous person—though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die— 8 but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. 9 Since, therefore, we have now been justified by his blood, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God. 10 For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life.

(Romans 5:6–10 ESV)

- 6 **Read Romans 5:11.** Write down where joy is found. What is this reconciliation we have received? Why does this bring life changing joy?

More than that, we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation.

(Romans 5:11 ESV)

- 7 **Read the scriptures below.** Write down where joy is found. Why is joy important for the Christian? What does it mean if we do not have joy?

For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking but of righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.

(Romans 14:17 ESV)

22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.

(Galatians 5:22–23 ESV)

TRANSFORMATION:

- 1 What steps are you going to take **today** to begin pursuing joy in Christ and in his kingdom?